House Passes $20 Million Increase to Maintain Humvee Maintenance Operations in Limestone

Wednesday, December 16 2009

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Mike Michaud announced that the House passed the FY 2010 Defense Appropriations bill, which contains a total of $50 million for Humvee maintenance performed at the Army National Guard Readiness Sustainment Maintenance Site located in Limestone, Maine. This funding level represents a $20 million increase in FY 2010 funding from the $30 million originally budgeted for the Loring facility, where the Maine Military Authority refurbishes vehicles for the Army National Guard. Michaud wrote a letter supporting the increase in funding this summer.

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“This funding will help ease the projected economic hardships in a region already suffering from the recession,” said Michaud. “It will also ensure the delivery of quality fighting vehicles for the National Guard and ensure the viability of an extraordinary team of craftsmen and a cost-efficient production facility.”

The FY 2010 House Defense Appropriations bill also contains $10 million in funding for a new family assistance and reintegration program for reserve component soldiers. Monies could be dedicated to providing service members with educational programs, financial assistance, marital counseling, mental health services, and a variety of other services.

“I worked closely with members of the Defense Subcommittee to make sure that our returning soldiers and their families receive the assistance they need,” said Michaud. “The committee knows that more must be done to assist our National Guard members and their families when they return from active duty. This new program is designed to meet the needs of our returning heroes.”

Michaud was also able to secure the following investments in Maine:

- $1,600,000 -- Cellulose Nanocomposites, University of Maine -- Panels for ballistic protection cost-effectively reduce the weight and enhance blast/ballistic properties of lightweight, rapidly erectable, field structures as well as other Class IV construction materials through development of low-cost, high-performance cellulose nanocomposites. The Army requires affordable, lightweight, rapidly erectable, modular protective structures and blast/ballistic-resistant materials to meet different threat levels. UMaine has successfully demonstrated such a system during blast testing. Protection will be further enhanced through the unique properties of affordable cellulose nanocomposites. This work meets the priority focus on nanotechnology set by the DOD since the enactment of the National Nanotechnology Initiative

- $1,600,000 -- Regenerative Medicine Research, Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory (MDIBL) -- MDIBL will conduct research for Regenerative Medicine to study marine vertebrates known to regenerate organs and limbs to learn how humans can regain this capacity. Military personnel suffering from combat-related injuries are often permanently disabled and face years of medical treatment and rehabilitation. The goal is to develop improved treatments for those injured in combat.

- $1,600,000 -- Translational Research, Muscular Dystrophy, The Jackson Lab -- Specialized mouse models of the variants of muscular dystrophy are needed to understand disease progression and successfully identify effective therapeutics. Small animal MRI will help translate discoveries into human health benefits. Funds will enable importation of all current mouse research models of muscular dystrophy into a single repository at The Jackson Laboratory (JAX). They will also support the JAX mouse model of DMD necessary for preclinical drug trial efforts. Additional models will be

fully genetically defined for disease onset and progression through MRI technology and made available to all muscular dystrophy researchers. Any new models created or identified will be added to the repository.

- $800,000 -- Personal Miniature Thermal Viewer (PMTV), Downeast Manufacturing and Assembly -- Effectiveness of currently fielded night vision goggles is greatly reduced in very low-light conditions, and thermal imaging devices are heavy and consumes too much power to be considered truly portable. PMTV design/demonstration program will provide an upgraded high performance miniature hand-held thermal vision device which incorporates the newly available 640 x 480 FPA into the current design as well as manufacturing readiness for pre-production designs.

- $1,600,000 -- Maine Institute for Human Genetics and Health (MIHGH) -- The MIHGH was founded by EMHS, Eastern Maine Medical Center, The Jackson Laboratory and the University of Maine as a regional collaborative venture to advance academics, medical research and clinical care in rural Maine. The mission of the MIHGH is to develop as a regional magnet translational research organization that builds on the strengths of its parent institutions, to improve clinical care, and reduce healthcare disparities in the under-served populations of Maine. The DoD will use technologies developed by the MIHGH to meet the health care challenges in the military, while the MIHGH will apply them to address reduction of disease risks in populations exposed to environmental or stress hazards.

- $800,000 -- In-Theater Evaluation of Ballistic Protection, University of Maine -- The project will fabricate and ship ballistic panel systems to field units for tent systems and Containerized Housing Units in response to immediate and emergent Army requirements to provide added protection to mobile troops operating in remote areas. The Rapid Equipping Force requested testing of the modular ballistic protection system in early 2008. That testing was successfully completed and the technology for the tent system is ready for fielding. The containerized housing unit system will be evaluated by in February 2009 and will be ready for fielding by mid-2009. Requested funding will fabricate and ship ballistic panel systems for tent systems and Containerized Housing Units to operational units in theater for evaluation.

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